

Message Text

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41

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ARAE-00 AF-06 IO-10 SSO-00 EUR-12

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 EB-07 DOTE-00 CG-00

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P 231918Z DEC 75

FM AMEMBASSY NASSAU

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7669

C O N F I D E N T I A L NASSAU 2151

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR PINR CU BF

SUBJ: ALLEGED CONGESTION IN HAVANA HARBOR

REF: STATE 300139

1. MINEXTAFF PERM SEC RUSSELL HAS REQUESTED EMBASSY'S ASSISTANCE IN ASCERTAINING PRESENT SITUATION IN HAVANA HARBOR. ACCORDING TO RUSSELL, USUALLY HIGHLY RELIABLE GCOB SOURCE STATES THAT HARBOR IS PRESENTLY CONGESTED AND THAT VESSELS, INCLUDING EASTERN EUROPEAN AND RUSSIAN FREIGHTERS, ARE EXPERIENCING UNUSUALLY LONG DELAYS (TWO TO SIX WEEKS) IN ENTERING HARBOR. WHEN ASKED WHY THE MINISTRY WISHED THIS INFO, RUSSELL STATED THAT IT WOULD BE USEFUL IN VERIFYING OR REPUDIATING MIAMI TV REPORTS AND RUMORS THAT EASTERN EUROPEAN FREIGHTERS WERE ANCHORED OFF BAHAMAS AND THAT THEIR PRESENCE WAS RELATED TO CUBAN AIR LIFT TO ANGOLA (EMBASSY RECEIVED REQUEST OVER WEEKEND FOR CONFIRMATION OF SIMILAR REPORT FROM MIAMI HERALD CORRESPONDENT WHO WAS REFERRED TO GCOB).

2. ACCORDING TO RUSSELL, GCOB HAS IN FACT VERIFIED PRESENCE OF A RUSSIAN SHIP SOUTH OF CAY SAL. IT WAS HIS OPINION THAT VESSEL'S PRESENCE THERE COULD EASILY BE EXPLAINED BY HARBOR CONGESTION AS SHIPS AWAITING ENTRANCE TO HAVANA HARBOR WERE
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RELUCTANT TO ANCHOR CLOSER IN GIVEN HEAVY SIDE ROLL IN AREA

BETWEEN FLORIDA STRAITS AND NICHOLAS CHANNEL. (RUSSELL IS AN EXPERIENCED SEAMAN HIMSELF AND DESCRIBED IN DETAIL HIS OWN EXPERIENCES IN ANCHORING OFF HAVANA IN PRE-CASTRO DAYS.)

3. ANY FACTUAL INFORMATION DEPARTMENT CAN PROVIDE EMBASSY ON PRESENT SITUATION AT HAVANA HARBOR FOR TRANSMITTAL TO MINEXTAFF WOULD BE APPRECIATED. EMBASSY ALSO REQUESTS DEPARTMENT'S EVALUATION ON POSSIBLE TIEIN BETWEEN PRESENCE OF EASTERN EUROPEAN SHIPS IN AREA AND CUBAN TROOP MOVEMENTS.
WEISS

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Message Attributes

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Margaret P. Grafeld
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06 JUL 2006

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